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PRESS RELEASE

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Date/Time of Occurrence Tuesday, August 28, 2001
Nature of Release Identity theft assistance available at Sheriff's website
Location of Release Placer County

Released by Sgt. John Addoms, (530) 889-7800

SHERIFF EDWARD N. BONNER RELEASES THE FOLLOWING:

Identity theft is quickly becoming *the* crime of the 21st century. In an effort to assist victims and to prevent this insidious crime, the Placer County Sheriff's Department has compiled important information that's available at all sheriff's locations and online.

By acquiring key information such as name, address, date of birth, social security number and mother's maiden name of their victims, identity thieves can commit numerous kinds of fraud, including taking over the victim's financial accounts, opening new bank accounts, purchasing automobiles, applying for credit cards and social security benefits, renting apartments and establishing services with utility and phone companies.

According to sheriff's Detective Corie Quillinan, who compiled this vital information along with Sgt. John Addoms, the pamphlet became a necessity as the number of victims grew exponentially in Placer County.

"There are so many things to be done when you're victimized and we want to help victims and consumers get back on track quickly," she said. "This information gives you all of the avenues to check."

Last year, more than 700,000 cases of identity theft were reported nationwide and it's considered the fastest-growing crime in the United States.

Prevention tips, also listed in the pamphlet, include removing mail from mailboxes promptly, having a secure mail receptacle and protecting personal information by releasing it only when absolutely necessary. Credit bureau information is also included, since it's recommended that consumers order an annual credit report.

The information is available at www.placer.ca.gov/sheriff or at any sheriff's office, substation or service center.

Copies of this press release are available on the Placer County Sheriff's Department website at <http://www.placer.ca.gov/sheriff>